

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Crime Lab Request for Base Adjustment for
Cost of Chemicals used in DNA Analysis

Background

The DNA/Serology Section of the crime laboratory in Missoula analyzes evidence submitted by local and state law enforcement agencies for biological evidence that may assist in the investigation of a crime.

The chemical reagents used in DNA analysis are very expensive. DNA analysis requires one reagent kit every six weeks. Each kit costs \$6,000.

DNA Section Shut Down for Eight Months

Crime lab protocols require that a minimum of two scientists work in a DNA section in order to review each other's work and agree on all DNA results the lab provides. In spring 2005, three of the four forensic scientists working in the DNA/Serology section resigned to accept higher paying jobs in the private sector.

With only one scientist remaining, we were required to shut down the entire the DNA section for eight months, from May 2005 until January 2006.

Cost of Chemicals Not in Base Budget

Because the DNA Section was shut down, the crime lab did not purchase any chemical reagent kits during that period. As a result, we have nothing in our funding for these chemicals for the first six months of our base year.

Funding Request

Since we anticipate that the lab's DNA Section will operate for the entire year, the lab requests the funding to cover the cost of the 4.5 kits not represented in our base budget. An additional \$27,000 in operating expenses is needed to allow the lab to purchase the necessary chemical reagent kits for each year of the biennium.

	FY 08	FY 09
Operating Expenses	\$27,000	\$27,000